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The Character of a good Prince.

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A  
SERMON

PREACH'D AT

St. MARY'S

BEFORE THE

Univerſity of OXFORD,

JUNE 11, 1730.

Being the DAY of

His MAJESTY'S Inauguration.

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By HENRY FELTON, D.D.  
Principal of *Edmund-Hall*, and Chaplain to  
his Grace the Duke of *Rutland*.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for B. MOTTE, at the *Middle-Temple Gate, Fleet-Street*: And ſold by the Widow FLETCHER, R. CLEMENTS, S. WILMOT, S. KEBLEWHITE, and A. PEISLY, Bookſellers in *Oxford*. M. DCC. XXX.

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TO  
The Right Honourable  
Arthur Onslow, *Esq;*  
S P E A K E R  
OF THE  
House of Commons.

SIR,



LAY hold of this Opportunity to express the great Honour and Regard I have for those excellent Qualities with which you adorn both Public and Private Life.



The near Relation you stand in to the Crown and the Commons of *Great Britain* makes this Address still more proper to You ; whose Affection to the King, and Regard to the Subject, are so justly distinguished, as to shew, that the Honour and Interests of the Crown are best promoted by maintaining the Rights and Liberties of the People.

In this Discourse I have endeavoured to discharge the Duty which I owe to my King and Country, in a manner proper to the Office I was called to ; and I hope the Publication of it will be of no Disservice either to the University or the World, when by this means it is made known, what Principles and Sentiments are recommended in this Place upon all proper Occasions.

Our Affection to the Church of *England*, and Concern for Religion can never be inconsistent with our Duty and Affection to the King, and when not only the Church, but our common Christianity is so violently assaulted, we do justly promise ourselves the Favour of the King, and the Protection of



the Laws, notwithstanding the importunate Demand for every Man to write and publish any thing in what manner he pleases.

I am for no Restraints, but such as the Laws have already made, and if those were to be taken off, the Government will consider whether this Licence must be indefinite without any Limitations: In Religious Debates it may perhaps be thought proper that every one should publish his Thoughts without Controul in the most ludicrous and blasphemous Manner; and in civil Concerns the like Liberty of saying and writing whatever, and in what manner they please, may with the same Reason and Modesty be insisted on.

The Liberty of the Press, and the Liberty of the People are indeed inseparable: They may be said to breathe and to expire together. But as the Liberty of the People is not destroyed, when Violators of the Laws are punished; neither is the Liberty of the Press infringed, when those are called

called to account who offend against the  
Laws by their Writings.

Libelling is forbidden, and Libellers are punishable, when they asperse the most private Character; much more when they traduce and defame Persons in the Highest and most Public Stations: most of all, we used to say, when their Blasphemies and Outrage rise unto God Himself. When the Libeller and Defamer, whether of Public or Private Persons, contrive to evade the Cognizance of the Law, it is a manifest Confession of their Guilt: And surely Reputation is of that incomparable Value, that the Laws cannot be too tender of it; nor too severe in punishing all base Practices to destroy it. Religion only of all things else is by her Enemies represented able to defend herself naked and alone, and tho' she is entituled to the Defence of the Laws, yet the World has been persuaded, that the Laws ought to stand aside, and leave Religion to stand or fall by herself.

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In serious Searches and Disquisitions after Truth, this is the fairest way, and absolutely necessary to find it; but Blasphemy and Scoffing can have no effect but to unsettle those Minds, who are not able to judge of the Merits of the Cause; and when such a Prophane Spirit begins to prevail, the Magistrate may possibly think it necessary to consider of and provide against the Consequences.

It is not my Province to judge, much less to decide, upon Public Affairs; but no one can help observing the different Opinions of Men, who take upon themselves the Privilege to commend, or condemn the Administration. I shall always think it becomes the Modesty of Private Men to be determined by the Public Voice: The Approbation of Parliament is a kind of Sanction, and no Measures can be more highly justified, than by the Resolutions of that Great and Honourable Assembly, in which You with so much Glory do preside.

I cannot wish a greater Blessing to our Country, than to see the highest Stations  
always



always filled with Persons of Your Capacity, Integrity, and Honour: And as I am assured of your singular Candour and Goodness equal to your Learning and Love of Letters, I promise myself this Discourse will find a favourable Reception at your Hands, when thus presented by,

*Edmund Hall;*  
July 27, 1730.

S I R,

*Your Most Humble,*

*And most Obedient Servant,*

**HENRY FELTON.**



PROV. xxix. 2.

*When the Righteous are in Authority, the People rejoice.*

**T**HIS Truth thus delivered in the Text is founded on the Reason of Things, and for the most part on the Experience of all former Ages. A just, a righteous, and most gracious Prince hath sometimes met with a perverse and rebellious People: Wicked and unreasonable Men will murmur and complain under the most equal Government, and, impatient of Subjection, they have blamed the Administration, and disputed the Authority of God himself. Such were *Corah* and his *Company* of old: such are they, who in later times have followed the *Gainsaying* of *Corah*, and continue profanely to object the *Horeb Contract* unto the *Almighty* Governor of the World. These are *perverse Disputers*, equal *Enemies* to *Government* and *Religion*: They are just Exceptions to the common Sense of Mankind, nor will their Repinings ever weaken the Truth here asserted. They may  
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be fullen and rebellious in their Hearts, but still in the general course of things, wherever the Righteous rule, the People will be glad; they will be sensible of the Prosperity they enjoy, and therefore they will rejoice, and bless the God of Heaven, so often as he setteth just Princes over them, and maketh them the Authors of publick Happiness; for the Blessings and Miseries of a Nation do greatly depend on those, in whose Hands the Administration lies: and an evil Ruler hath seldom brought Joy and Gladness to his People.

But how miserable soever any Nation is, when oppressed by an evil Administration; a good and gracious Prince, who studies the Welfare of his People, and governs them with equal Laws, soon altereth the Face of Things. The Prospect is changed, and a Scene of Happiness opens to their View: the Blessings of his Reign are universal, and the kind Influence descends upon all his Subjects: He is righteous himself, and requireth all, that approach his Person, to conform to his Example: He looks upon Uprightness and righteous Dealing as the best Qualifications, and esteems no Recommendation so great as that of Virtue. Thus he lays the surest Foundation of his People's Happiness, and the Observation of the Text, under such a Prince, and by God's Providence will hold for ever true:

*When the Righteous are in Authority, the People rejoice.* Not



Not to trouble you with a critical Canvas of the Text, as the first Part of it in some Translations is differently rendered; the Words may be considered not only as a general Maxim, but also as a special Truth respecting the *Personal good Qualities* of the *Prince* without regard to his *Political Virtues*; because Government may be righteously administred, where those in Authority are not righteous in their private and moral Character; and Oppression may sometimes prevail, where the supreme Authority is lodged in the most righteous Hands; but still whenever the Throne is filled with a Prince conspicuous in Virtue and Goodness, the People will rejoice and bless God for such a Prince, whatever the Event may be; for to take these Words in their most natural Signification, they must mean, that when *Good and Virtuous Persons are in Authority, the People rejoice*. And, if we take them in a larger Sense, that the *People rejoice when their Rulers are righteous in their Administration*; this is also true.

But since a *righteous Administration* is seldom known, but from *righteous Principles*, we will take the Words, without any further Distinctions, to import thus much; That *when a good Prince is on the Throne, and executes Justice and Judgment, the People feel the happy Effects of such a Government, and rejoice. When the Righteous are in Authority, the People rejoice.*

In discoursing upon this Text therefore, I will consider first,

I. What are the *chief Qualities, which form a righteous Prince.*

II. What *Influence* these *Qualities* have on the *Happiness* of a *Nation*, to make the *People rejoice.* Thirdly,

III. I shall conclude with an Application suitable to the Solemnity of *this Day.*

I. I shall consider what are the *chief Qualities, which form a righteous Prince.*

Now besides that *personal* Virtue and Goodness, which are the surest Foundation of all the rest, the *chief Qualities* are these,

1. With respect to his own *Subjects* to govern them by just and equal Laws; to consult their *Happiness*, their *Peace* and *Security*; to encrease the *Riches* of his Kingdom at *Home*, and to advance its *Reputation Abroad.*

2. With reference to his *Neighbours* never to encroach or usurp unjustly on them, but to defend himself against all foreign Invasions; to be a religious Observer of all his *Treaties* justly and honourably made; to maintain the *Publick Faith* of Nations, and to revenge the Violation of it on those sacrilegious Heads that break it.

3. With regard to *God*, that he sincerely defend and promote the true Religion; that he protect the *Church* and the *Faith* of *Christ* against *Schism* on the one hand, and  
*Heresy*

*Heresy on the other; That so upon the whole every Prince, as our Liturgy most admirably expresses it, may study to preserve the People committed to his charge in Wealth, Peace, and Godliness.*

1. The first of these *Qualities* is with respect to his own *Subjects*, to govern them by just and equal Laws; to consult their Happiness, their Peace and Security; to encrease the Riches of his Kingdom at Home, and to advance its Reputation Abroad.

Whosoever in that high Station doth not in some good measure pursue these ends cannot be esteemed a good and righteous Prince. It may often be impossible for the best Princes to accomplish their Desire of their Subjects Welfare: an unhappy Conjunction of Circumstances may sometimes give so ill an Aspect to their Affairs, that the Malignity of the Influence will infect every Period of their Reign: They may find their Kingdoms at their first Accession involved in mighty Difficulties; and the People, because as with us, *Theirs* is so far the Power, resolved not to remove them: And while these Difficulties, thro' the perverse Industry of the Enemies to their Country's Peace and the ill Dexterity of self-interested Men, grow higher and become more entangled and perplexing, the Happiness of those Nations, notwithstanding the gracious Disposition and pious Care of their Princes, after a patient Contention with the Obstinacy and rebellious



lions Temper of their Subjects, is at last turned into Misery and Desolation : but where the People will dutifully contribute to their own Prosperity ; there the Prince, who is truly the Father of his Country, will make its Welfare his principal Concern throughout the whole Course and in all the Branches of his Administration.

In pursuance therefore of this glorious End, as the Civil Foundation of his People's Happiness, he will govern them by just and equal Laws ; by an impartial Distribution of Justice and Judgment, and a firm Adherence to the Constitution : He will decline all Ways of Cruelty and Oppression himself, and discountenance them in others : *He will break the Jaws of the Wicked, and pluck the Spoil out of his Teeth : He will put on Righteousness, and it shall cloath him : His Judgment shall adorn him as a Robe and a Diadem.*

This Obligation upon Princes is founded in that *Fatherly Relation* they bear to their Country, and does not properly rise from any *Compact* or *Contract* Original, such as 'tis pretended Men enter'd into, when they left the *State of Nature*, and receded from their *Natural Equality*. For such a *State of Nature* is imaginary ; there never was such an *Equality* : and whatever *Contracts* were made in process of Time, the *Fatherly Relation* is antecedent to any such *Agreement*. Upon this Principle of *Natural Obligation* the *Patriarchs* governed their *Houses* in the  
Begin-

Beginning of the World; and among these *Job* is a Pattern of a just and righteous Administration. They had indeed *Civil* and *Supreme* as well as *Paternal Jurisdiction*, but all rose from that *Natural* and *Paternal Power*, which every *Father* exercised over those of his own *Houſhold*. The *Natural* is now long ſince paſſed into a *Civil Relation*, and the true *Original Contracts* were between theſe *Patriarchal Sovereigns*. They indeed were in a *State of Equality*: They had a *Power* and *Authority* which they could transfer, and the greater *States* were formed by a *Coalition* of many of theſe into one. This is the true *Origin* of all larger *Communities*, and there is ſtill a juſt *Proportion* between a *Family* and a *Kingdom*. The ſame *Disposition* which makes a good *Father* to his *Family*, makes alſo a good *Prince* to his *People*. The difference of *private* *Virtue* and of *public* lies only in the *Object*: Both are founded in the ſame *Eternal Reason*; and a good *Prince*, in the *Administration of Government*, may be ſaid to exerciſe his *Private Virtues* in a *Public Station*; and the ſame *Rules*, that make him a *juſt Man*, make him alſo a *righteous Prince*.

And now, while he governs his *People* with juſt and equal *Laws* at *Home*, like a good *Father* of his *Family*, he will look abroad: He will conſult their *Peace* and *Security*: He will raiſe their *Riches*, and enlarge their *Commerce*, and advance their  
*Reputation*;



*Reputation*: He will, if possible, preserve unto them the *Blessings of Peace*; if not, he will defend and vindicate his own and his *Kingdom's Honour* by a just and necessary War: He will not suffer them to dissolve in Ease and Luxury, nor to learn those destructive Arts of Sloth and Idleness, which joined with the other, open an easy Passage to foreign Conquest or domestic Slavery; but he will keep up the Vigour of their Minds by Labour and Exercise, and Employments suitable to their several Occupations: He will endeavour to raise, and, from his own, to diffuse a public Spirit over all the Nation. And by the same Example he will form the Manners and fix the Virtue of his People: He will look with the kindest Aspect upon Learning, and the Seats of Learning: He will greatly encourage a profitable Pursuit of Knowledge; and discountenance it only when it is abused to *Atheism, Immorality, Heresy, Schism, and Superstition*: He will require a Sobriety of Behaviour, and exact *Justice, Chastity and Temperance, Piety and Religion* from all Orders and Degrees of Men. Thus will he make his Nation flourishing at *Home*, and revered *Abroad*: He will be jealous of his *Honour*, and esteem it his greatest *Glory* to be renowned in the World for ruling a *free, a willing, a powerful, a wise, a religious, and understanding People*.

What



What Prince of Spirit, equal to the Royal Character he sustains, can endure to see his Nation look little in the Eyes of Men, and himself of no Reputation? To see his Neighbours advancing in Fame, in Riches, and new Acquisitions, while himself lies inglorious and unactive by? A good Prince therefore will always think himself concerned to raise the Reputation of his Country, to maintain its Glory, and to carry it higher in the World than ever it was known in the time of his Predecessors; that so he may be *redoubted* by the neighbouring Nations, as a *great, a wise, a powerful and mighty King*, who *rules with Justice at Home*, and is *terrible to Oppressors Abroad*.

This leads us to the next *Quality* requir'd to form a righteous Prince, and that is,

2dly, With reference to his *Neighbours* never to encroach or usurp unjustly on them, but to defend himself from all foreign Invasions; to be a religious Observer of all his Treaties justly and honourably concluded: to maintain the Public Faith of Nations, and to revenge the Violation of it on those sacrilegious Heads that break it.

The Reason of this *Quality* is founded on the *Law of Nations*, which lays the same Obligation on Princes to be just to each other, that the *Laws of God and Nature*, and the *Civil Constitution* of any Country lay upon particular Men to be so in all respects: It is therefore as great Injustice for one Prince

to invade another, and to despoil him of his Dominions, as it is for a private Man to break in upon the Possession of his Neighbour, and rob him of his Goods.

A good Prince therefore will never be a Public Robber, but he will defend his own Subjects from all Depredations, and to his Power take Vengeance on the Spoiler. It lieth upon Princes to preserve the *Peace* of the *World*, to defend their *Neighbours* as well as *themselves*, and always to resist an *encroaching* Power. They are *Conservators* of the *Law* of *Nations*, and should ever preserve the *Balance* of Power; vigorously opposing every Attempt of *Universal Monarchy*, and looking upon those *ambitious Invaders*, as *Public Enemies* to all the States and Princes of the World.

But besides this Justice which is requir'd of Princes with regard to each other, it is further to be considered, that as there is a Necessity of *mutual Trust* and *Confidence* between *Man* and *Man* in the civil Concerns of Life, there is an equal Necessity of *mutual Trust* and *Confidence* among *Princes*, for the Safety and Security of their respective Kingdoms, that they may not live under continual Alarms from Jealousies and Apprehensions of being perpetually invaded by one another. Hence their Words and their Treaties ought to be most sacred and inviolable, as the only Bond of Peace and Confidence between them; Here they are under  
the



the strictest Obligation, and it is as much a *Breach of Public Faith* for any Nation to be deficient in fulfilling a *League of Friendship*, as it is for an *Enemy* to violate the *Treaties* he had made :

A good Prince therefore will most religiously observe this Part of his Character, to be faithful to his Engagements, and sincere in all his Alliances: This he knows to be so absolutely necessary for the Peace of the World, that he will not only observe it himself, but exact it of others: Upon his *Enemies* he will severely revenge all Breach of Treaties: With respect to his *Friends*, after long *Patience* and *Expence*, the kindest *Resentment* is to *withdraw* himself from them, and *stand* at least upon his *Guard* against them.

There are some general Rules for interpreting all *Treaties* and *Conventions* between Princes and Nations, so that the *Letter* and the *Spirit* of the *Treaty* do always go together, that all *Equivocation* be avoided, and the same *Equity* and *Construction* take place on *both Sides* of the *Question*. A Violation or a Non-Performance on one Part ever sets them free on the other, especially where that other Party is circumvented and oppressed by any Inconvenience, which, contrary to his Intention, such a *Treaty* hath brought upon him.

These are plain and allowed *Reliefs* against  
*over-reaching* and *disadvantageous Treaties*,  
B 2 besides.



besides that it is to be considered, whether such *Treaties* are not Null from the Beginning, as are concluded *beyond* the *Instructions* given, and *beyond* the *Powers* that *could* be given with those *Instructions*; especially when the *End* is manifestly defeated, and the *Conditions* are vacated, on which the *Treaty* plainly proceeded.

But as those are most forward to break their *Treaties*, who are most *cunning* and *over-reaching* in making them, a good Prince will be fired with *double* Indignation against the *Contrivers* of *Delusive Leagues*, and the impious Violators of the Public Faith. That we ever *suffer* by *Treaties* is an *Argument* of our *plain Dealing*, and at the same time an *Indignity* offered to our *Understanding*: We know what those we treat with *ought* to mean, but not always *what* they do really *intend*.

In opposition therefore to these refined Dealers in Negotiation, a righteous Prince, who hath none but *Honourable Designs* in view, will always act with *Uprightness Himself*, and disdain the *little mean Arts* of *Circumvention* in *others*: He will pursue with the utmost Vengeance those sacrilegious Heads, that break the Public Faith, and profane the *sacred* Name of Kings: He will with all his *Might maintain* the *Faith* of *Nations*, and suffer himself to be wronged neither by his *Enemies* nor his *Friends*: He will be so religiously tenacious of his Word,

as never to depart from it, if it is in his Power to perform it: that, as it was *divinely* said by a *King of France*, whose Example it will be the *Glory* of his *Successors*, and of all *Kings* to follow; *When Truth is banished from the World, she ought to be found in the Mouth of Kings.*

I proceed now in the third place to the last and principal *Quality* of a righteous Prince, which is,

3. With regard to *God*, that he sincerely defend the true Religion; that he protect the *Church* and the *Faith* of *Christ* against *Schism* on the one hand, and *Hereſy* on the other with all their Train of *Enthusiasm*, *Infidelity*, and *Superstition*.

That this is the Duty of Christian Princes hath never been denied by any but the professed Enemies of the Christian Faith; till of late Years the *Protection* of the *Civil Magistrate* hath been represented as *inconsistent* with, and *destructive* of the *Kingdom* and *Church* of *Christ*: and since that, the Dispute hath been carried on by other hands against any *Legal Establishment* of Religion, till our *Infidel Writers* have at last asserted, that *God himself can impose no Religion, but that of Nature upon the World.*

It will be difficult to answer so as to distinguish the several Adversaries to Establishments. As their Principles are common, the Answers must be general, and the Defence of Establishments by the clear Reasonings of an  
excellent



*excellent\* Person, whose Loss is very sensibly regretted, makes the Task less necessary. Only as the Assertions seem now to be broader and bolder, I shall consider the Obligation of Princes to maintain God's true Religion; and endeavour to evince it by some peculiar Arguments with regard to whatever hath been advanced from any Quarter against such Obligation.*

Formerly our Contests were rather about the *Persons* in whom the care of Religion was lodged, and the *Degree* of Authority invested in them for its Preservation and Defence: but now the Question is concerning any *Authority* in religious Affairs at all. 'Tis not disputed now, in whole *Hands* such *Power* is lodged, but denied that it is lodged in *Any*. Formerly we had Contests with the *Papist* and the *Puritan*, who equally denied the Prince's Authority in the Church: *Both* made him *ministerial* to the *Ecclesiastical Power*, and only the *Executioner* of their *sacred Will* and *Pleasure*: but in this Age have arisen a Set of *Infidels*, who deny at once the whole *Revelation* of God, and the whole *Gospel* of Christ; who, pretending to rest upon *natural Religion* alone, have denied the *Faith*, renounced all *positive Institutions*, and own no *Revelation*, nor any *Duties* beyond the *Dictate* of *natural Reason*: These are so far from admitting the *Magistrate*, that they will not suffer God himself to interpose. Ac-

\* The Reverend Dr. Rogers.

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according to them there may be *Contracts* and *Combinations*, *Laws* and *Punishments* for the *collecting* and *conserving* of *civil Societies*, but there can be no *Agreement*, no *Bond*, no *Submission* to any *Prescript*, *Form* or *Profession* of *Religion*. *Religion* is a meer *personal Concern*, they say; and as every one is obliged to think and believe for himself, no one is obliged to think and believe as another doth. Thus while some have denied the *Secular Power*, and others the *Spiritual*, while some of ourselves have denied the *Magistrate* his *Authority*, and the *Church* her *Discipline*, these *Unbelievers* come, and more consistently with themselves, deny the *Authority* of the *Magistrate*, and the *Power* of the *Church*, by denying the *Authority* of *God* himself: For if *God* have any *Authority* to prescribe, or hath any where prescribed a *revealed Institution* of *Religion*, he must have also *authorised* some *Powers* for the *Defence* and *Administration* of it.

In former Disputes, when we laboured to defend the Right of Princes against the *Encroachments* of the *Papacy*, and the *Usurpations* of the *Presbytery*: our Business was to *state* and *define* the *Church's Power* consider'd, first as a *spiritual Society* without the *Favour* and *Protection* of the *State*, and then considered again as a *spiritual Society*, not only enjoying the *Favour* and *Protection* of the *State*, but also *incorporated* into it; all the *Members* of either, unless they renounced the

the *Community* of one, being *Members* of both. The Arguments then used to assert the *Supremacy* will at the same time prove what Duties and Obligations rise from that *Supremacy*. For *Supremacy* implies *Protection*; and it is *absurd* to suppose any *Degree* of *Authority* without an *equal* *Obligation* of *Defence*.

We used to say, that to the *supreme Magistrate* is committed the *chief* *Care* of *Religion*: That he is the *Keeper* of both *Tables*: That it is his *Duty* to provide for the *Honour* of *God*, as well as for the *Happiness* of his *People*: and were so simple as to imagine that providing for *God's Honour* was the *surest* *Way* to provide for his *People's Happiness*. We taught that *Kings* were to be *nursing Fathers* and *Queens nursing Mothers* to the *Church*, and that therefore it was their *Duty* to protect and defend it; and we ever concluded, since such *Princes* as *David* and *Josiah* among the *Jews*, as *Constantine* and *Theodosius* among *Christians*, are celebrated for supporting and encouraging *God's true Religion*: that such especially of our *Kings* and *Queens*, who have professed the *Religion* as in this *Church* it *stands*, while they have *defended* the *Religion* so professed, and *maintained* its *Establishment*, have in so doing discharged a *Duty* most acceptable to *Almighty God*; and it would be strange indeed, that the *same* *Care*, which was the *Commendation* of the *Jewish Kings* should be the *Reproach* of the *Christian*. That



That God may *prescribe a revealed Institution* of Religion to the World, should need no Proof to those, who acknowledge the *Dominion* of God and the *Subjection* of Man: That he should require the *supreme Magistrate* to protect and defend this Religion, should be disputed by none, who believe the Gospel. The Objections to the Magistrate's interposing in Affairs of Religion so as to encourage one Profession of it, and discountenance another, have been answered at large; and I am not willing to waste the Time upon that Point, since I do not see how Hypocrisy is encouraged, or Sincerity discountenanced by the Favour of the State to the established Religion. Those who follow any Religion for Interest, can be sincere in none; and those who are sincere in any, will at the same time be peaceable. As to Persecution, we do utterly disclaim it: It was begun by the *Arians*, and carried on by other Denominations of that Heresy, and is continued by the *Papists*; but was ever disclaimed by the Catholic Church, and we avow for our selves, that the Magistrate draws his Sword against none, but those, who under the Pretence of Conscience are Sowers of Sedition, who turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction: As to all other Clamours, I will only say, that the Engines of this World are not made use of by our Laws to compel Men into our Communion, but to guard our  
C selves



selves against the Attempts of our Enemies; to distinguish those, who are of our Communion, from those who are not, that her Adversaries may not approach to hurt her. And how loudly soever they exclaim; to them and all others it is *enough* to say, that we have a *Right* to our *Establishment*. We have the *Oath* of the *King*, the *Strength* of the *Laws*, and the *Constitution* of the *Realm* to support it; and when *these* fail us, we may *throw* our selves into the *Protection* of *those*, who so importunately do complain, and so *fiercely* dispute against the *Protection*, we enjoy. As to all other *Inconveniencies* pretended from *Establishments*, the Answer is, that all *Constitutions* have their *Inconveniencies*: Whatever they are, they are *inconvenient* to those who will not *conform* to them: And so far *civil* as well as *religious* *Establishments* are liable to the same Exceptions.

There is another *Objection* against *Establishments*, which, because it is a *boasted* one, I will beg leave to subjoin. If Princes are obliged, say they, to maintain *God's true Religion*, then every Prince is obliged to maintain that Religion, which he thinks the *true one*. But this is a manifest *Fallacy* of the *Consequent*: For then it will follow that under an Obligation to maintain the *true Religion*, a Prince may be obliged to maintain a *false* one; or that the Religion he professes is the *true one*, whatever it be; or that because a Prince is not obliged to  
maintain

maintain a false Religion, therefore not the *true*.

It will require a longer Process, than the Time will allow me, to discuss this Point: Only I shall beg leave to lay down these short Conclusions: That this Duty doth not only rise from the Dictate of *Nature* in general, but from the Precept of *Revelation* in particular: *Nature* instructs us, that God is to be worshipped in some acceptable Manner, but *Nature* cannot prescribe this Manner; if it can, then the Worship of God would have been one and the same over all the World. But as the *Religion* of *Nature* it self never was *uniform* either in *Practice* or *Profession*, the Duty respects those *Declarations* God hath made, and those *Regulations* he hath given concerning *Religion*, which is *first* founded in the *Nature* and *Reason* of Things, and *afterwards* upon the *revealed Will* of God: It is therefore the *Voice* of *Nature* to *obey* the *Dictates* of *Revelation*, and the Duty can be performed *there* only *where* God's *true* Religion is professed. The Prince who professes a false Religion transgresseth his Duty, and by promoting it he transgresseth the more: For the *Truth* of *Religion* stands not in the *Opinion* of Men, but in the *Word* of God: The *Question* is now properly confined to *Christian* Countries. If God had not given the World a Religion by *Revelation*, there might have been some Pretence for the *La-*



*titudinarian Scheme*; but in *Christian Nations*, those Princes only can observe this Precept, who make the *revealed Will of God* the *Standard of Faith and Government* in the Church. The Right to establish is indeed in them, but unless they establish the Truth, they misapply their Power. Were the *History* of their Reigns to be delivered by *inspired Writers*, as were the Reigns of the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, they would be recorded, as those Kings were, according as *they did that which was right, or that which was evil, in the Sight of the Lord*. There is *Idolatry* in some *Christian Churches*, as there was in the *Jewish*; and *damnable Doctrines*, even the *Doctrine of Devils*, are sometimes *brought in*, and *professed* by those, who call themselves *Christians*; and therefore all those Princes, who establish *Idolatry*, and all those who in former times espoused *heretical Doctrines*, as *Constantius* and *Valens*, or have endeavoured to overthrow *Christianity*, as *Julian*, these all did *Evil in the Sight of the Lord*; *Julian* especially, who pretended an *Impartiality* to all *Religions*, the more *effectually* to *destroy* the *Catholic Faith*.

So far then as Men are under an Obligation to receive the Will of God revealed unto them, so far *Christian Princes* are obliged to protect and defend God's *true Religion*; This holds in all *Ages* and in all his *Dispensations*, and what was the great *Com-  
mendation*



*mendation of Abraham, is the Duty of every Prince professing the Gospel of Christ, according to this glorious Testimony given by God himself: For I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord to do Justice and Judgment. Gen. xviii. 19.*

I have now gone through the *Qualifications* requisite to form a righteous Prince, and with reference to each of them we may learn the Advantages of a settled Government, and the Duties of the supreme Governour from the Want of, or any Defects in, the higher Powers. In the Book of *Judges* it is *four* Times observed upon *three* great Offences, that *in those Days there was no King in Israel*: The Consequence of which was, *Every Man did that which was right in the Sight of his own Eyes*, which with regard to Religion especially, is the *blessed Liberty* now so earnestly contended for. But *when there is a King in Israel*, and that King will discharge his Duty, *then every Man shall not do that, which is right in his own Eyes*; then with respect to his own Subjects the Men of Gibeah shall not commit such Villany: with reference to his Neighbours, the Danites shall not invade a People quiet and secure; with regard to Religion, Micah shall not set up his Idol and onsecrate a Priest at his Pleasure.

In the next place I should proceed to shew secondly,

II. What

II. What *Influence* these *Qualities* have on the *Happiness* of a *Nation* to make the *People* rejoice.

And I might from the natural *Tendency* of Things, from the *Blessing* of God, and the usual *Order* of his *Providence*, easily demonstrate that these *Qualities* have a sure *Influence* on the *Prosperity* of any *Nation*, and diffuse *Joy* and *Gladness* upon all the *People*: The *whole* resteth upon *Religion*, as its *immoveable Basis*: *Justice* and *Judgment*, *Mercy*, *Fortitude* and *Honour*, all rise from that sure *Foundation*: And a *Regard* to God's *Glory* is the very *Height* and *Perfection* of human *Policy*; but I shall wave all this as less necessary to be proved by *topical* *Deductions* after what hath already been delivered; and so I pass on in the third and last *Place*

III. To an *Application* suitable to the *Solemnity* of *this Day*.

We are now assembled to celebrate his *Majesty's happy Accession* to the *Throne*: A *Prince* eminently qualified for the great *Functions* of *Government*, who declares he hath nothing more at *Heart*, than the *Welfare* and *Glory* of his *People*.

In this *Nation* the *fundamental Laws* are just and equal, wisely framed for the *Honour* of the *Prince*, and *Liberty* of the *People*; and the whole *Body* of the subsequent *Statutes*

*Statutes* bear a peculiar *Signature* and *Distinction* suitable to the *Temper* of our *Constitution*, and the *Genius* of a *free People*. By these the *Rights*, *Liberty* and *Property* of the *Subject* are preserved: We rejoice in the most impartial *Administration* of *Justice* and *Judgment*, and it is a glorious Evidence of the *King's inherent Justice* and *Honour*, that the *Laws* are so *duly executed* by such *able* and *upright Hands*.

And for the *Trade* and *Commerce* of the Nation, whatever *Difficulties* they have laboured under, it is certain the *King* hath expressed the most *fatherly* Care to remove them: And it ought to be no Objection to a *Christian King*, that they are removed by peaceable Measures, rather than by the uncertain Events of War. For how superior soever we may think our selves, we cannot without the most impious Presumption promise our selves the Victory. We believe, I speak as a Christian, that the *Battle is the Lord's*, and we know, that *it is not always to the Strong*.

The Regard which our gracious Sovereign hath expressed to the neighbouring States and Nations, to his Enemies, and to his Allies, is in nothing more eminent, than in his Conduct towards them, while he is so religiously faithful to his Engagements with his Friends, and hath *so greatly repressed his martial Ardor*, and only *shewed the Face of War* to bring his *Enemies to Peace*.

As



As to Religion, the *Church of England* is assured of his constant Care and Protection; and though *Infidels* are offering daily Outrages to *God* and his *Gospel*, they have not been suffered to proceed without Animadversions: And while our *reverend Fathers* have in the most christian Manner reprov'd them, and with the most zealous *Charity* to the Souls committed to their Charge, have warn'd and arm'd the People against *these fiery Darts of the Wicked*, they have received also an exemplary Rebuke from the *Tribunals of Justice*. Princes need only consider the necessary *Influence*, such *Blasphemy* and *Infidelity* (as now prevail) must have upon *Government*, to put them on their *Guard*: While these Men presume to say, that *Princes have nothing to do with Religion*, and that *God himself can impose none, but that of Nature*, it will soon appear, how very *weak* and *ineffectual* the *civil Power* is, *disjoined* and *excluded* from all *religious Concerns*; and then the Prince will soon be convinced, how *greatly* it is his *Interest* as well as *Duty* to *support* the *one*, if he ever hopes to *preserve* the *other*.

As to the *Mysteries* and *Miracles* of the *Gospel*, which are the common Subject of *Heresy*, *Blasphemy*, and *Scorning*, let me only say, that though we must judge and believe for our selves, we are only *Judges* of the *Fact* and the *Evidence*, that such *Propositions* are delivered, and such *Facts* asserted;

but we are no *Judges* of the *Propositions* and of the *Faëts* themselves, *How these things can be.*

This I say for the sake of those, who are made to believe, they can *understand all Mysteries* and *all Knowledge*; whereas tho' the *Affertions* be exceeding plain, the manner *How* is *incomprehensible*; and no wonder, *For God himself is incomprehensible.*

And now we may congratulate ourselves in a *King*, who is so truly the *Father* of his *Country*: in a *Queen* of exemplary *Piety*, *Prudence*, and *Goodness*: in a numerous *Offspring* which surrounds the *Throne*; with this *invaluable Blessing* to *Us* as well as *Them*, that *they* are formed under the *Inspection*, and by the *Example* of their *Royal Parents* whose *Virtue itself is a mighty Portion*; and with Joy we behold *One* and also the *Other Hope* of *Great Britain*; sure *Pledges* of a *Protestant Succession*, *Defenders* of our *Faith*, and *Protectors* of our *Church*, in whom is bound up the very *Life* of our *Constitution*, our *Religion*, *Laws*, and *Liberties*: with whom and with their *Successors* may they descend to our latest *Posterity*!

In *Acknowledgment* of all these *Mercies*, let us return our most humble *Praise* and *Thanksgiving* unto *Almighty God*, and submit ourselves in all loyal *Obedience* unto the *King* as *supreme*, and unto *Governors* as unto *those that are sent by him*. Let us of this *Place* especially, knowing how we have been

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traduced



*traduced and misrepresented by our Enemies, go on to show, that This is, as it hath ever been, the Seat of Loyalty as well as Learning: That we are Examples as well as Teachers of all Duty to the Crown, and that our Conduct only speaks the Language of our Prayers.*

While others are raising Difficulties, and by finding Faults are embarrassing the Public Affairs; while they are clogging the Wheels of Government, and throwing Stops and Obstructions in the way; it shall be our Praise to take off the Weight which they hang upon it, to remove the Obstructions, and open the Passage, that so the Counsels and Measures of our King may run freely on in a smooth and delectable Tenor from the Beginning to the End.

We may do well to settle this in our Minds, *never to believe that Republicans can be Patriots, or that the Enemies of our Monarchy can be Friends to their Country: Those who traduce the Public Management, would persuade us that our Liberties were almost expiring; and they, who represent us as a contemptible People, do of all others contribute the most to make us so: If any think such Persons zealous either for Church or State, they will find but little ground for the one, and none for the other. And it is very observable of the opposite Parties, however they differ in other Points, when they touch upon Religion, their Principles and Sentiments are the same.* It



It is certain the *wisest* and *ablest* Men cannot fix the fluctuating Condition of human Affairs, nor ought they to be answerable for the Measures that are taken in *foreign Councils*. It is our Happiness, that we have a King, who knows his own Concerns, and employs those in them, who have drawn their Knowledge from these *Fountains* of Learning, and have showed themselves *Friends* to the *Places* of their *Education*, when *Others*, that have been bred among us, have endeavoured *greatly to distress us*.

But under the Protection of our Gracious King we shall be safe, and his Favour will be our constant Patronage and Defence; and therefore let us pray for all Happiness and Prosperity unto him: We will pray for the *Peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love thee: Peace be within thy Walls, and Plenteousness within thy Palaces: for there is the Seat of Judgment, even the Throne of the House of David: Thither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord, to give Thanks unto the Name of the Lord: And therefore with the Royal Psalmist shall our pious Sovereign join and say, For my Brethren and Companions sake I will wish thee Prosperity: Yea, because of the House of the Lord our God I will seek to do thee Good: And in return the Church shall offer up her constant Prayers*

for the King. *Let his Enemies be clothed with Shame, but upon himself let his Crown for ever flourish; so that after a long and happy Reign upon Earth, he may receive an immarcessible Crown of Glory in Heaven. Amen.*

*Now unto him, by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice: To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God; To the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; be Honour and Glory for ever. Amen.*





*Now in the University Press at Oxford,*

**E**IGHT Sermons Preach'd at the Lady Moyer's Lecture in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in the Years 1728, 1729. By HENRY FELTON, D. D. Principal of Edmund Hall, Oxon.

*Instead of a Specimen from any of the SERMONS, the Author thinks it will be more satisfactory to give this Plan of the whole Design.*

IN SERMON I.

After a short State of the Controversy, are examined the Principles of Heresy and Infidelity, particularly some Principles of Mr. Locke, on which the Patrons of Infidelity, whatever he designed, do build.

IN SERMON II.

Is considered the Strength and Compass of our Natural Powers, how far they will carry us in the Knowledge of God. Under which Head the Common and the Scripture-Notion of the Light of Nature is examined, in order to state and fix what it truly is, and how far it will reach. Wherein an Original Revelation antecedent to the Scriptures is asserted.

IN SERMON III.

The Weakness and Defects of our Natural  
Light



Light are consider'd. And here these Points are particularly proposed: 1. The Weakness of the Light of Nature left unassisted to itself. 2. Its Capacity to extend its Views upon proper Instructions. 3. Its Inability under all possible Advantages to arrive at a full and adequate Knowledge of God: or in the Words of *Job*, *to find out the Almighty unto Perfection*.

In all which Discourses proper Applications are made all along, as occasions offer, to the *Deists*, *Arians* and *Socinians* with regard to Divine Revelation, and the great Articles of Faith.

IN SERMON IV.

The Nature and Necessity of Divine Revelation in all its Branches are consider'd; and here after an Explication of the Text these Points are particularly laid down. 1. That whatever we know of God and our Duty by the Light of Nature, we know the same more perfectly by Revelation. 2. That where we have some Knowledge without Revelation we must nevertheless believe according to what is revealed. 3. That where we have no Knowledge at all without Revelation, we are obliged to take the Points, Doctrines and Articles, exactly and precisely as they are revealed. Under the two former the *Deists* Pretensions, and under the last the *Socinian* and *Arian* Schemes, &c. are consider'd. Lastly in Defence of taking the great Points of pure Revelation in one uniform

form Sense, the Pretences for a more loose undetermined Interpretation are answer'd, as they are drawn from Charity, Sincerity and Variety in Religion.

IN SERMON V.

Some Rules for the right Understanding of divine Truths, and for the Interpretation of Scripture, which conveyeth them, are proposed. In order to which it is consider'd, 1. Negatively, that divine Truths, and particularly the great Mysteries of Revelation, are not taught in the same manner with secular Sciences. *Not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth.* 2. Positively that they are to be interpreted, taught and received in a Manner proper and peculiar to themselves *in the Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

From hence for the right Understanding and interpreting those Scriptures, in which the great Mysteries of our Faith are delivered, after some proper Cautions are those two great Rules of teaching and interpreting Divine Truths proposed: The Analogy of Language, and the Analogy of Faith. This Sermon concludes with the Analogy of Language in opposition both to a Literal and Figurative Sense with a proper Application of the Argument to the *Arians*, &c.

SERMON VI.

Concerning the Analogy of Faith, in which the Agreement and Consistency of the Scriptures with themselves throughout the Old and New Testament concerning the Unity of

of the Godhead and the Divinity and Distinction of the Persons is asserted against those who confound the Distinction, or deny the Divinity.

SERMON VII.

In which the same Argument is pursued and several Rules are laid down for interpreting according to the Analogy of Faith and particularly applied to the great Mysteries and Articles of our Belief: especially with regard to the *Arian* Controversy.

SERMON VIII.

Being an Enforcement and Application of the Whole, in which the Catholic and the Opposite Doctrines are compared: and here the Method of teaching, the Difficulties arising on both sides, and the Consequences necessarily following from both are considered.

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